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IN THE

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER TERM, 1949

No. 443

TITUSVILLE DAIRY PRODUCTS COMPANY,
Petitioner,

vs.

CHARLES F. BRANNON, Secretary of Agriculture of the United States,
Defendant.

PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE THIRD CIRCUIT AND BRIEF IN SUPPORT THEREOF.

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ELMER E. HABTER, JR.,
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INDEX

Subject Index

	Page
PETITION FOR WRIT OF CERTIORARI	1
Opinion Below	2
Jurisdiction	2
Questions Presented	2
Statutes Involved	3
Statement	4
Basis of Decisions Below	6
Specification of Errors to Be Urged	7
Reasons for Granting the Petition	8
Prayer for Writ	9
BRIEF IN SUPPORT OF PETITION	11
Specifications of Error	11
Argument	12
1. Your Petitioner from October 5, 1941 to January 16, 1942 bought all its milk and sold all its milk within the State of Pennsylvania, and did not directly burden, obstruct, or affect interstate commerce merely because it held a health permit indicating its plant satisfied the health requirements for New York City	12
2. The opinion of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit nullifies the Pennsylvania Milk Control Law	16
Conclusion	17

Table of Cases Cited

Carter v. *Carter Coal Company*, 298 U. S. 238 ..... 8, 13
Champlain Rfg. Company v. *Corporation Commission*, 286 U. S. 210, 76 L. ed. 1062 14
Chassaniol v. *City of Greenville*, 291 U. S. 584 ..... 8, 14

Opinion Below

The opinion of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, delivered by Judge O'Connell for the Court, is reported in 176 F(2) 332 and also appears in the record of the present proceedings (R 482). The opinion of the Court, entered August 4, 1949, affirms in part and reverses in part the decree entered by the United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania. The opinion of the latter Court is reported in 63 F. Suppl. 104, and appears in the Appendix, in the proceedings before the United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit filed herewith, page 17a.

Jurisdiction

The order of the Court below, the United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, was entered August 4, 1949 and amended August 15, 1949 (R 488-489).

The jurisdiction of this Court to issue the writ of certiorari applied for is invoked under Title 28, U. S. Code, Sec. 1254 (1).

Questions Presented

1. Where a milk handler whose plant is located in Pennsylvania, buys milk only from Pennsylvania producers and sells the same and its products exclusively in Pennsylvania, is such a handler subject to New York Milk Marketing Order No. 27 of the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States, by virtue of the fact that such handler possesses a permit issued by the health authorities of the City of New York for shipment into New York City?

The District Court answered in the negative.

The United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit reversed the District Court and answered the question in the affirmative.

2. Where a handler whose plant is located in Pennsylvania, buys milk only from Pennsylvania producers, and sells the smaller portion of its cream in New York City, is such dealer subject to New York Milk Marketing Order No. 27 of the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States as to its sales made outside the New York Milk Marketing Area, by virtue of the fact that it possesses a permit issued by the health authorities of the City of New York for shipment into New York City?

The District Court answered in the affirmative and the United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit affirmed the lower Court on this point.

Statutes Involved

The Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, (50 Stat. 246, 7 U. S. C. A. 601 et seq.); and the Milk Control Law of Pa. of April 28, 1937, P.L. 417, 31 P.S. 700j et seq., are the statutes involved. These two statutes have been declared constitutional and their validity is not herein involved. The questions here involved rest solely upon the application of the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937. The Secretary of Agriculture, under its authority, issued Milk Marketing Order No. 27 which affects the New York Milk Marketing Area and in Article I, Section 1 thereof, the term "handler" is defined as follows:

> "6. 'Handler' means any person who engages in the handling of milk, or cream therefrom, which was received at a plant approved by any health authority for the receiving of milk to be sold in the marketing area, *which handling is in the current of interstate commerce or directly burdens, obstructs, or affects interstate commerce.* This definition shall be deemed to include a cooperative association of producers with respect to any milk received from producers at any plant which it causes to be delivered from producers to any other handler for the account of such association and for which such association collects payment." (Italics added.)

The questions presented bring under consideration this definition of "handler." The position of Petitioner is that during the period of time (October 5, 1941 to January 16, 1942) it shipped no milk or milk products into the New York Milk Marketing Area, it in no way burdened, obstructed, or affected interstate commerce. Petitioner takes the further position that during the time it did ship some cream only to New York City, it did not burden, obstruct or affect interstate commerce so far as its entire operation was concerned, but only in regard to that cream actually shipped into the Marketing Area. This position brings under consideration that part of the definition printed in italics. In this connection it should be pointed out that in the year 1945, Order No. 27 was amended by deleting from the definition that part in italics.

The Marketing Agreement Act of 1937 gives the Secretary authority to promulgate orders affecting milk being shipped in interstate commerce or which burdens, obstructs or affects interstate commerce. The Milk Control Act of Pennsylvania, having been declared constitutional by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania and by your Honorable Court, as a proper exercise of the Pennsylvania police power in regulating the health of the citizens of Pennsylvania, gives to the Milk Control Commission of Pennsylvania, the authority to regulate the prices milk handlers in Pennsylvania must pay milk producers, and fixes the prices milk handlers must charge Pennsylvania consumers. Your Honorable Court held this power to be justified even though it indirectly affected interstate commerce. (*Milk Control Board* v. *Eisenberg Farms* 306 U. S. 346, 350, 59 S. Ct. 528.)

Statement

Petitioner is engaged in the business of buying and selling milk. Its plant is located in Titusville, Pennsylvania.

From October 5, 1941 to January 16, 1942, Petitioner sold no milk and bought no milk outside the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The Secretary of Agriculture attempted to impress upon Petitioner the provisions of Federal Marketing Agreement Order No. 27, which regulates milk shipped to the New York Metropolitan Milk Marketing Area, on the basis that Petitioner had not surrendered, until January 16, 1942, its New York City Health permit which had been in existence for a long period of time.

For the period from July, 1941, to October 5, 1941, Petitioner purchased all its milk from Pennsylvania producers but did ship a small portion of its total receipts to the New York Marketing Area in the form of cream.

The Secretary of Agriculture attempted to impress the provisions of Order No. 27 on Petitioner as to his entire operation during this period of time.

During these two periods of time, Petitioner complied with the Pennsylvania Milk Control Law, of April 28, 1937, P. L. 417, 31 P. S. 700j et seq., by paying the producers the minimum prices established by the Pennsylvania Milk Control Commission for all the milk purchased and sold in Pennsylvania.

During the period from July 1941 to October 5, 1941, Petitioner complied with Federal Order 27 with regard to the milk purchased from Pennsylvania producers which was converted to cream and was shipped to the New York Marketing Area.

Petitioner filed a petition pursuant to the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act with the Secretary of Agriculture, asking that it be determined that Petitioner was not subject to the provisions of Federal Order No. 27 during either of the aforementioned periods of time except as to the cream shipped to New York during the period of July 1941, to January 16, 1942.

The Secretary denied the Petition. His denial was affirmed by the judicial officer. Petitioner filed an appeal to the United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania from these decisions as is provided by the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act.

The District Court reversed the Secretary of Agriculture for the period October 5, 1941 to January 16, 1942 when no sales whatsoever were made outside the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania but affirmed the Secretary as to the period of time from July 1941 to October 5, 1941.

The Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit reversed the United States District Court and held Petitioner to be subject to Federal Order No. 27 during both periods of time, notwithstanding this would permit any milk dealer in Pennsylvania to ignore the Pennsylvania Milk Control Law by merely obtaining a New York health permit without any intention of shipping milk to the New York Marketing Area and, notwithstanding such holding results in a determination of what constitutes or affects interstate commerce in complete disregard of the actual facts concerning the operations made subject to Federal control.

Basis of Decisions Below

The United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania based its decision on the fact that inasmuch as no milk was shipped from Pennsylvania to the New York Market from October 5, 1941 to January 16, 1942 and no milk was purchased by Petitioner from without the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the operations of Petitioner were obviously not in interstate commerce and did not burden, obstruct or affect interstate commerce. The Court was of the opinion that the mere holding of a health permit, which meant that Petitioner operated its plant under such a sanitary condition and purchased milk which was produced under such sanitary conditions as met New York City health requirements, did not put Petitioner in interstate commerce or in the position of burdening, obstructing, or affecting interstate commerce. The same District Court, however, was of the opinion that during the period of July, 1941 to October 5, 1941, when some cream was shipped to New York City by Petitioner, this was sufficient to declare Petitioner's entire operation as

either being in interstate commerce directly or burdening, obstructing or affecting interstate commerce.

The United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit based its opinion upon the theory that since Petitioner held a New York City health permit and did not ask to have it revoked, it therefore affected interstate commerce because it might have shipped milk to New York City if it could obtain customers; and upon a further fact, that during the time Petitioner was shipping milk into New York City, it had received from the Producers Settlement fund the sum of $55,000.00 for transmission to its shippers or producers. The opinion did not state, nor did the United States Attorney argue that Petitioner in any way benefited by this $55,000.00; nor does it appear in the record anywhere. Petitioner was merely the conduit through which its producers received this amount of money, because the New York blend price was higher than the prices Petitioner was required to pay for the uses to which it put its milk The Circuit Court cites *Nebbia* v. *New York,* 219 U. S. 502, and *U. S.* v. *Rock Royal Co-Operative,* 307 U. S. 533, as justification for the interpretation of the Secretary of Order 27 in this case. These two cases offer no authority for such an interpretation. The first case has to do with a New York State Milk Control Law. The second case has to do with milk being shipped into the Milk Marketing Area.

Specification of Errors to Be Urged

1. The United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit erred in holding that where Petitioner held a health permit issued by the City of New York, its operation affected interstate commerce and was therefore subject to Federal Order No. 27, even though no milk was bought or sold without the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

2. The United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit erred in holding, in effect, that the health authorities of the City of New York could determine what

milk handlers did or did not burden, obstruct or affect interstate commerce.

3. The United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit erred in holding, in effect, that, regardless of where milk was purchased or sold, it would affect interstate commerce if the handler held a New York City health permit; but it would not affect interstate commerce even though it was shipped across the state line without the benefit of a health permit.

4. The United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit erred in holding that, if a small portion of a handler's milk, bought wholly within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, was manufactured into cream and shipped to New York City, the handler's entire operation of receiving whole milk from producers patronizing it and selling it to consumers all within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania was burdening, obstructing or affecting interstate commerce.

Reasons for Granting the Petition

1. The United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit has decided a Federal question in a way which conflicts with applicable decisions of your Honorable Court in that it held that the mere holding of a New York City health permit places the holder thereof in the position of burdening, obstructing or affecting interstate commerce, regardless of the manner of his actual operation.

This is in conflict with the decisions of your Honorable Court to the effect that the actual facts concerning the operation determine what does and what does not affect interstate commerce. *Chassaniol* v. *City of Greenville*, 291 U. S. 584; *Carter* v. *Carter Coal Company*, 298 U. S. 238.

2. The United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit by its decision has given validity to the act of a Federal agency in delegating strictly Federal powers

to an official of a State or some sub-division thereof. The legislative power, to some degree, may be delegated to some proper Federal officials, but it can not be delegated to the officials of a state or some sub-division thereof. RE Rahrer, 140 U. S. 545, 546.

3. The United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit has made it possible for any milk handlers located in Pennsylvania, to ignore the Pennsylvania Milk Control Law by merely obtaining a New York health permit, without any intention of shipping milk into New York, but for the purpose merely of evading the Pennsylvania statute. This would frustrate the purposes for which the Pennsylvania Milk Control Law was passed, which purposes have been held proper and valid by your Honorable Court. This procedure would nullify the decision in the case of *Milk Control Board* v. *Eisenberg Farm Products,* 306 U. S. 346. This is so because if the Federal Order has jurisdiction, the State Milk Control Law and the Orders issued thereunder have no jurisdiction. This could mean a complete negation of the Pennsylvania Milk Control Law, a health law enacted by the Pennsylvania Legislature in the proper exercise of police power for the benefit and protection of the health of the citizens of Pennsylvania.

4. The United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit has, by its opinion, announced a theory of interstate commerce law in complete conflict with the decisions of your Honorable Court, in that it does not require a reasonable classification to be made by an administrative officer, the effect of which is to completely destroy intrastate commerce in the field of milk, and its regulation by the states. *Manhatten G. E. Co.* v. *Commissioner of Internal Revenue,* 297 U. S. 129.

Wherefore, Petitioner prays that a Writ of Certiorari be issued out of and under the seal of the Supreme Court of the United States, directed to the United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, requiring that

Court to certify the records and the cases herein to the Supreme Court of the United States for its review and determination.

Respectfully submitted,

WILLIS F. DANIELS,
ELMER E. HARTER, JR.,
GEORGE H. HAFER,
Attorneys for Petitioner.

STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA,

County of Dauphin, ss:

Willis F. Daniels, being duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is counsel for Petitioner herein; that he has read the within petition and knows the contents thereof, and that the allegations in the said Petition are true to the best of his knowledge, information and belief.

WILLIS F. DANIELS.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 28th day of October, 1949.

CLAIRE FORTENBAUGH,
[SEAL.] *Notary Public.*

Certificate of Counsel

We hereby certify that the foregoing petition is, in our opinion, well founded and entitled to the favorable consideration of the Supreme Court of the United States, and that it is not filed for the purpose of delay.

WILLIS F. DANIELS,
ELMER E. HARTER, JR.,
GEORGE H. HAFER,
Attorneys for Petitioner.

IN THE

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OCTOBER TERM, 1949

No.

TITUSVILLE DAIRY PRODUCTS COMPANY,
Petitioner,

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CHARLES F. BRANNON, Secretary of Agriculture of the United States,
Defendant.

BRIEF IN SUPPORT OF PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI

Specifications of Error

The United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit erred in the following respects:

1. The United States Circiut Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit erred in holding that where Petitioner held a health permit issued by the City of New York, its operation affected interstate commerce and was therefore subject to Federal Order No. 27, even though no milk was bought or sold without the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

2. The United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit erred in holding, in effect, that the health

authorities of the City of New York could determine what milk handlers did or did not burden, obstruct or affect interstate commerce.

3. The United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit erred in holding, in effect, that, regardless of where milk was purchased or sold, it would affect interstate commerce if the handler held a New York City health permit, but it would not affect interstate commerce even though it was shipped across the state line without the benefit of a health permit.

4. The United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit erred in holding that, if a small portion of a handler's milk, bought wholly within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania was manufactured into cream and shipped to New York City, the handler's entire operation of receiving whole milk from producers patronizing it and selling it to consumers all within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania was burdening, obstructing or affecting interstate commerce.

ARGUMENT

1. Petitioner, from October 5, 1941 to January 16, 1942, bought and sold all its milk within the State of Pennsylvania, and did not directly burden, obstruct or affect interstate commerce merely because it held a health permit indicating its plant satisfied the health requirements of New York City. The Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937 (7 USCA 601 et seq.), was enacted as an economic measure under the power of Congress to regulate commerce between states, but, it cannot be interpreted broadly enough to grant the Secretary of Agriculture the authority to bring within his jurisdiction, by means of a Federal marketing agreement order, a milk handler located in Pennsylvania who buys and sells all his milk within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, merely because the handler holds a New York City health permit. When the Congress delegates to an administrative official the power to carry into execution

certain powers granted him by the Congress that authority must be exercised in a reasonable manner. The rule of reason governing administrative officers, is found in the case of *Manhattan G. E. Company* v. *Commissioner of Internal Revenue,* 297 U. S. 129;

> ". . . and not only must a regulation in order to be valid be consistent with the statute, but it must be reasonable."

It is perfectly obvious that before an intrastate operation can directly affect, burden or obstruct interstate commerce, there must be something more than a mere intention on the part of someone to ship either in interstate commerce or in a manner to burden, obstruct, or affect interstate commerce. *Carter* v. *Carter Coal Company,* 298 U. S. 230;

> "That commodities produced or manufactured within a state are intended to be sold or transported outside the state does not render their production or manufacture subject to federal regulation under the Commerce Clause."

In this case, we do not find anything to indicate that there even existed an intention to ship milk into the marketing area but find only a plant that was operated under such sanitary conditions as would permit it to ship milk into the City of New York.

A long line of cases holds that production and manufacturing are not interstate commerce and the activities of those industries thus engaged do not affect interstate commerce except incidentally or remotely. Their business is therefore not subject to regulation by the federal government.

United Mine Workers v. *Coronada Coal Company,* 259 U. S. 407, 66 L. ed. 975

Oliver Iron Mining Company v. *Lord,* 262 U. S. 172, 67 L. ed. 929

Gibbons v. *Ogden,* 9 Wheat. 1, 6 L. ed. 23

Hope Natural Gas Company v. *Hall*, 274 U. S. 284, 71 L. ed. 1049

Foster Fountain Packing Company v. *Haydel*, 278 U. S. 1, 73 L. ed. 147

Utah Power & Light Company v. *Pfost*, 286 U. S. 165, 76 L. ed. 1038

Kidd v. *Pearson*, 128 U. S. 1, 32 L. ed. 346

Champlain Rfg. Co. v. *Corporation Commission*, 286 U. S. 210, 76 L. ed. 1062

The business of buying and selling cotton locally produced, processed and warehoused is local in character and the local occupation tax was held not to contravene the Commerce Clause although the course of business was such that all of the cotton so bought was ultimately shipped by the buyer in interstate commerce. *Chassaniol* v. *City of Greenwood*, 291 U. S. 584 (1934).

Petitioner in this case bought milk from October 5, 1941 to January 16, 1942 which was produced in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and sold in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Production and sales were in the Western part of Pennsylvania and moved in that direction and not in the direction of New York City.

Under the decisions of your Honorable Court, this could not be construed to directly affect, burden or obstruct interstate commerce.

The Secretary of Agriculture took jurisdiction over Petitioner for this period of time on the sole basis that Petitioner held a New York City health permit. The use of this test although convenient is far short of the proper exercise of the administrator's authority. To hold that the possession of the health permit burdened or directly affected interstate commerce when no milk or milk products were shipped into the area is drawing the reasonable relationship between the object to be accomplished and the methods

used for that purpose to such a fine line that the breaking point is reached and an absurdity results.

The Secretary himself, recognized that something more was required before a milk dealer or handler should be considered as being subject to his Orders, for the definition of a handler found in Article I, Sec. 1 of Order No. 27 reads as follows:

> "6. 'Handler' means any person who engages in the handling of milk, or cream therefrom, which was received at a plant approved by any health authority for the receiving of milk to be sold in the marketing area, *which handling is in the current of interstate commerce or directly burdens, obstructs, or affects interstate commerce.* This definition shall be deemed to include a cooperative association of producers with respect to any milk received from producers at any plant which it causes to be delivered from producers to any other handler for the account of such association and for which such association collects payment." (Italics added.)

It will therefore be noted that the definition provides that not only must the handler hold the health permit, but the handling must be either in the current of interstate commerce or directly affecting, burdening or obstructing interstate commerce. This definition was in force during the time involved in this case, but that part of the definition found in italics was subsequently by way of amendment stricken out. The definition as amended eliminated one of the requirements but this elimination was not in effect until after the time involved in this case.

The Secretary, however, is attempting to interpret the definition as it existed during the period here in question as though it were written as it existed subsequent to the time here involved. The striking from the definition these words can not be considered as an idle gesture, nor can the words as they appeared in the original definition be

surplusage and of no effect, nor can the Secretary give a retroactive effect to the definition as it was promulgated subsequent to the time here involved. *Genesco* v. *Walling*, 324 U. S. 244, 265; *Russell* v. *United States*, 278 U. S. 181; *Crawford on Statutory Construction*, Sect. 200; *Sutherland on Statutes and Statutory Construction*, 3rd edition, Sect. 4926. It is held in the above case and stated by the above authorities that words should not be considered surplusage and without meaning nor ignored unless no other construction can be given the entire context.

If it were to be assumed that the Secretary's definition as above quoted made an intrastate transaction subject to federal jurisdiction on the ground that it directly burdens, affects or obstructs interstate commerce merely because the person involved holds a health permit granted by an official of a state or sub-division thereof, then such action would be illegal because Congress can not transfer its legislative powers to a state. *Re Rahrer*, 140 U. S. 545, 560.

2. The opinion of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit nullifies the Pennsylvania Milk Control Law. The Pennsylvania Milk Control Law established in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the Milk Control Commission with powers to fix the prices milk handlers must pay their producers and the prices handlers are to charge consumers. This statute was enacted primarily for the benefit of the health of the citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and has been held by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court in a number of cases to be constitutional. *Rohrer* v. *Milk Control Board*, 322 Pa. 257, 186 A. 336, (1936); *Colteryahn Sanitary Dairy* v. *Milk Control Commission*, 332 Pa. 15, 1 A (2d) 775. Your Honorable Court also held the statute constitutional in the case of *Eisenberg Farm Prod.* v. *Milk Control Board*, 332 Pa. 34, 200 A. 854. It was held in the cases above cited and in others since decided that the Pennsylvania statute was a proper exercise of the police power and was dealing with a

local condition and therefore could properly incidentally burden or affect interstate commerce.

If the United States Circuit Court of Appeals' decision is a correct pronouncement of the law, any dealer in Pennsylvania, wishing to avoid the obligations impressed upon him by virtue of the Pennsylvania statute with regard to the prices he pays producers, could do so by merely obtaining a New York City health permit. This would be highly desirable by him because the price to be paid to producers as fixed by the Secretary of Agriculture is lower than the price fixed by the Milk Control Commission of Pennsylvania to be paid to producers. This would obviously negate and completely frustrate the objects of the Pennsylvania statute and would in no wise carry out the objects of the Agricultural Marketing Act.

Our federal system requires that there be a distinction between what is national and what is local. *National Labor Relations Board* v. *Jones and Laughlin Steel Company,* 301 U. S. 1 (1937); *U. S.* v. *Rock Royal Co-Operative,* 307 U. S. 533, 83 L. ed. 1446. The preceding cases relied upon by the government in the lower courts all dealt with the situation where the milk was actually shipped from the plant involved, into the milk marketing area. This is not the situation in the case now before your Honorable Court from October 5, 1941 to January 16, 1942.

Petitioner, from July 19, 1941 to October 5, 1941 did ship some cream into the City of New York. It is contended, however, that only that milk from which the cream was derived was subject to Federal Order No. 27, and Petitioner did comply with the order to that extent. The reasoning heretofore set forth will apply to the milk bought and sold in Pennsylvania during this period of time.

Conclusion

It is therefore respectfully submitted that the United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit erred

in its order and that a Writ of Certiorari should issue to it in order that the questions hereby presented by it may be reviewed by the Supreme Court of the United States.

Respectfully submitted,

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